

"OBESITY CURES"

Never before in the history of advertising has there been so much money expended in advertising so-called "Obesity Cures." They are of every class and description. It is particularly fortunate that the Propaganda Department of the American Medical Association has seen fit to issue a new pamphlet on this subject. Every physician ought to have this pamphlet and read it. In the introduction, we read: "Women's fashions during the past few years gave a wonderful stimulus to one branch of quackery—the exploiters of 'obesity cures.' The desire to be slender—and slender to a degree often far beyond that compatible with good health—caused thousands of women to throw away money on so-called reduction treatments that were either dangerous or worthless, and sometimes both. Thyroid extract was the basis of many of the 'fat reducers' first put on the market, and this drug is still used in some of them. The public, however, has been warned of the dangers of this powerful agent, so that it is becoming increasingly difficult for those who live on the fat of the land to sell remedies of this type. . . .

"Practically every 'fat cure,' no matter to what type it belongs, is exploited under two specific claims: First, that those who use it do not need to diet; second, that they need not exercise. It is hardly too broad a statement to say that every 'obesity cure' is also sold under the claim that it is different from every other 'obesity cure.' The most wildly extravagant representations are made by the dispensers of these worthless cures. Especially is this the case in those that are sold on the mail-order plan rather than directly through the drug stores. It is after the purchaser has parted with her money that she finds how widely the 'treatment' she has purchased differs from what she had been led to believe it was. The preparations discussed in this pamphlet are but a few of the hundreds on the market. They are, however, typical."

The pamphlet, of course, is limited to the most widely advertised of these alleged cures, and the list includes interesting information regarding alleged cures that are advertised extensively, including California. The "cures" exposed are: "Absorbite Reducing Paste," "Allan's Anti-Fat," "Antipon," "Arbolone Tablets," "Auto-Masseur," "Z. T. Baker," "C. H. Barbour," "Basy Bread," "Berledets," "Biel (Hattie) & Co.," "C. E. Biel," "M. S. Borden Co.," "Botanic Medicine Co.," "H. C. Bradford," "F. T. Brough," "Burns Belt Co.," "G. F. Cain," "Clark's Thinning Salts," "Corpulim," "W. C. Cunningham," "Dalloff's Tea 'Contre l'Obesite,'" "Doctors' Essential Foods Co.," "Jean Downs," "Elimiton (Hurwitt)," "Every Woman's Flesh Reducer," "Fatoff," "Fell Reducing Treatment," "Figuroids," "Get Slim," "Graziana Reducing Treatment (Zehrkur)," "Texas Guinan, Inc.," "Marjorie Hamilton," "Hargreave's Reducing Wafers," "Hughes & Hughes XL Reducing Pills," "G. J. Hurwitt," "Interstate Drug Co.," "J. Z. Obesity Tablets," "F. J. Kellogg," "Kellogg's Safe Fat Reducer," "Lucile Kimball," "J. A. Knox," "Oil of Korein," "W. Lawlor," "Louisenbad Reduction Salt," "Marmola," "Modern Vacuum Cap Co.," "Morlene," "Nelson Lloyd Treatment," "Newman Obesity Cure," "Nikola," "Normal Pills," "Onadal," "Parnotis," "A. J., J. N. and N. Petrucci," "Phatolene Tablets," "Phythy-rin," "Phytoline," "Protone Co.," "Rengo Co.," "Russell's Anti-Corpulent Preparation," "Sanitone Wafers," "Sel Amaigrissant Clark," "Seymour Treatment," "Society of Associated Physicians," "R. T. Stradus," "Sylphine," "Trilene Tablets," "(F.) Turner Triplex System," "Verlie Gatlin Co.," "Vincent's Anti-Stout Pills," "Walker Pharmacal Co.," "A. Gordon Wallace's Treatment," "M. Wood," "Pale's Fertilizer Tablets," "Zobeide."

All of these propositions are analyzed and commented upon freely in the pamphlet referred to.

For example, one of these products most extensively advertised in California is "Marmola." This product has been analyzed and was shown to contain essentially the following:

Dried thyroid gland.....	1.4 gr.
Phenolphthalein	0.4 gr.
Sodium chlorid	0.7 gr.
Powdered Fucus vesiculosus (bladder-wrack)	5.0 gr.
Extractive	2.5 gr.
Oil of peppermint.....	trace

Any product which depends for its essential action on the presence of thyroid extract is much too dangerous for indiscriminate use. Physicians have, at various times, reported cases of patients with severe or obscure nervous symptoms that investigation showed were due to the taking of some "patent medicine" containing thyroid extract.

Validity of License Tax on Physicians—We are frequently asked as to the legality of county, municipal and other local taxes on physicians. The following case of the city of Redding v. Dozier (California), 206 Pac. R., 465, will answer the question permanently:

"The District Court of Appeal of California, Third District, in affirming a judgment in favor of the plaintiff city for \$10, which was alleged to be due as a license tax imposed under an ordinance adopted by the city, says that the defendant was a physician and surgeon residing and practicing in the city and having his office at his place of residence. The city is one of the sixth class. The ordinance was entitled 'An ordinance to license various classes of business, shows, exhibitions and games within the city of Redding for the purpose of revenue and regulation, and fixing the rates of license tax upon the same and providing for the collection of the same by suit or otherwise.' Section 1 provided that every person, firm, etc., who had a fixed place of business, and engaged in, carried on, or conducted any business, exhibitions or games described in this ordinance, within the city, should pay a license therefor in the amount thereafter specified. Section 2 provided that the licenses to be paid, the persons who should be required to pay the same and the business on which the same were to be paid were, besides others, '(29) lawyers, doctors and dentists, \$5 per quarter.' The principal question raised was whether the city had authority to impose the tax. The court thinks that it had, under the statutes of the State. In *Ex parte Johnson* (Calif. App.), 190 Pac. 852, it was held that a city may impose a license tax for carrying on the business of a lawyer at a fixed place of business. In *Ex parte Falusha*, 194 Calif. 697, 195 Pac. 406, the Supreme Court of California reached the same conclusion. It must be held that the same rule applies to a physician and surgeon."

"The complaint in the present case alleged that the defendant was and now is a doctor practicing medicine and having his office and principal place of business in the city of Redding. The defendant argued that the allegation as to place of business was not the equivalent of a 'fixed place of business.' The court deems the criticism hypercritical. The defendant testified that he had a large practice; that he received patients at his residence and performed operations there; that he regularly kept patients at his residence for treatment when they required close observation; that there was no room in his residence designated as an office, but that he treated his patients in the living room; and that he treated most of his patients at their homes. The foregoing evidence, coming from the defendant, the court thinks showed conclusively that he had a fixed place of business and that the alleged defect in the complaint, if conceded to be a defect, could not have prejudiced his rights."

"Hearing was denied by the Supreme Court of California."